

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 and 9-24 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 9, 11, 12, 15, 17, 23, and 24 are independent. In light of the remarks contained herein, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections.

In the outstanding Official Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 3-4, 6, 10, 12-14, and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Watanabe et al.* (USP 5,953,481) in view of *Freeman et al.* (USP 5,579,239); and rejected claims 2, 5, 7, 9, 11, 15, and 17-19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Watanabe et al.* in view of *Freeman et al.* and *Matsumoto et al.* (USP 5,796,428). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Although the Official Action mailed June 2, 2003 indicates the action as final, further to a telephone interview with Andrew Christensen on July 22, 2003, the finality of the outstanding Official Action was withdrawn. As such, the outstanding Official Action is non-final.

**Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103 -
*Watanabe et al./Freeman et al.***

In the Reply filed March 18, 2003, Applicants argued that the Examiner was taking an overly-broad interpretation of the teachings of *Freeman et al.* in combining the video camera 1 and remote unit 2

of *Freeman et al.* to teach wireless communication. However, the Examiner failed to respond to Applicants' argument in the outstanding Official Action. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner consider this argument and respond in due course.

With regard to the Examiner's rejection of claim 3, the Examiner asserts *Freeman et al.* discloses compressing image data, transmitting the image data, and then decompressing the image data at the external apparatus, citing to the Abstract, lines 1-6. However, the present invention as set forth in claim 3 recites, *inter alia*, an electronic camera as set forth in claim 1, further comprising an encoding device that encodes, according to the identification information, at least one of the image data and the operation information. It is respectfully submitted that while *Freeman et al.* discloses compression/decompression in general, neither *Freeman et al.* nor *Watanabe et al.* teach or suggest an encoding device that encodes, according to identification information, at least one of image data and the operation information. As such, it is respectfully submitted that claim 3 is not obvious over *Watanabe et al.* in view of *Freeman et al.*

Examiner Interview

Applicants are filing concurrently herewith a Request for Interview. It is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact

the undersigned to schedule and conduct an interview prior to formally considering Applicants' arguments contained herein.

Conclusion

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Catherine M. Voisinet (Reg. No. 52,327) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

Applicants respectfully petition for a three (3) month extension of time pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.17 and 1.136(a). A check in the amount of \$950.00 in payment of the extension of time fee is attached.

Appl. No. 09/933,197

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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